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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
APPARITIONS,  
Ghosts, Spirits or Spectres ;

CONSISTING OF  
Variety of remarkable Stories of Apparitions,  
attested by People of undoubted Veracity.

By a CLERGYMAN.

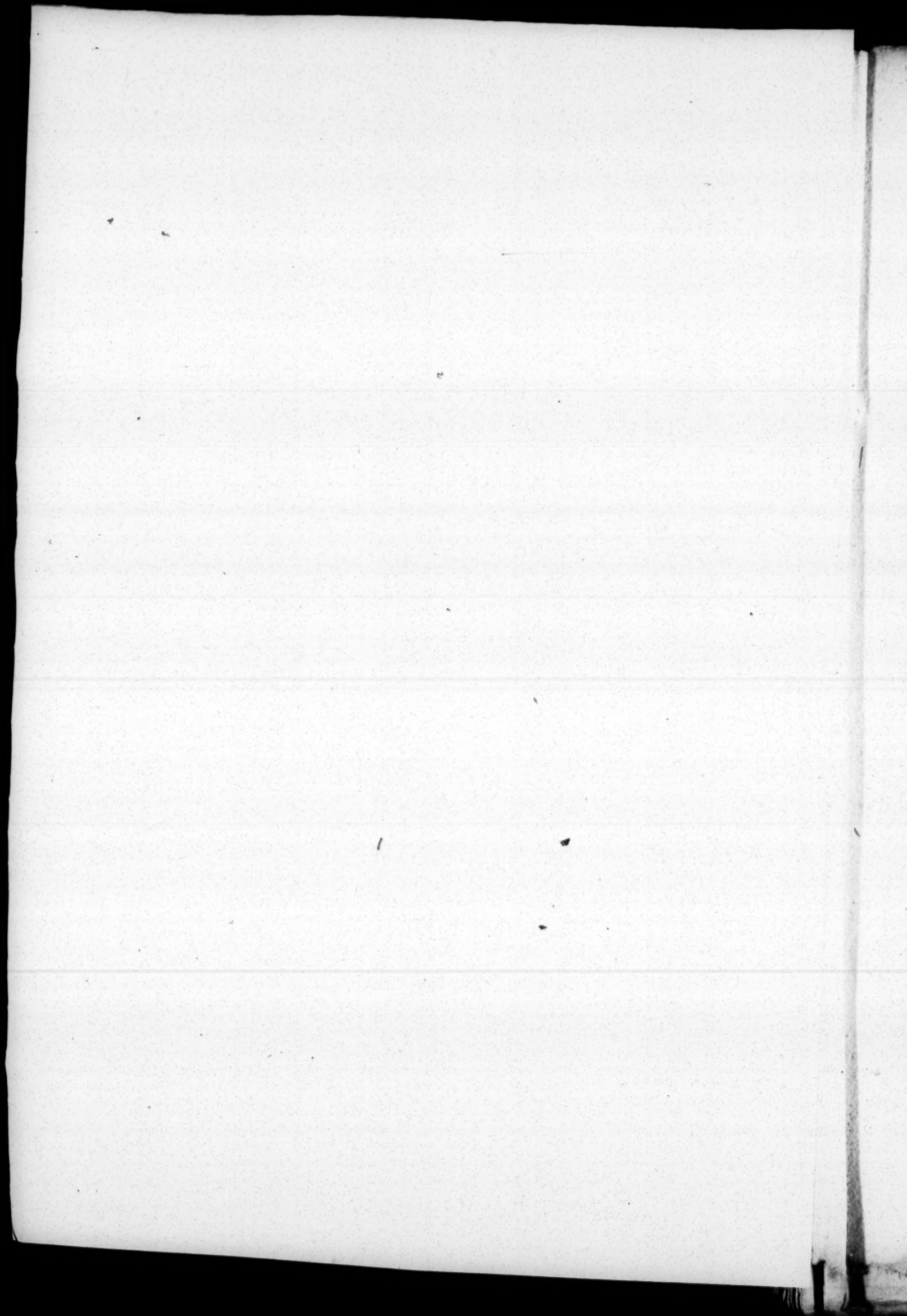
✿ Containing among others, an account of an apparition, communicated by Sir Charles Lee to the Lord Bishop of Gloucester. Another from the learned Dr. Isaac Walton. Also the apparition of Sir George Villiers, relating to the murder of the Duke of Buckingham, extracted from Lord Clarendon's History.

“ Stories of Ghosts and Apparitions deserve to be taken  
“ notice of, as they contain a most certain proof of the  
“ immortality of the Soul.”

ADDISON.

LONDON:

Printed for J. SIMPSON, at Shakespear's Head, behind  
the Chapter-house, St. Paul's Church-yard. 176~





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## INTRODUCTION

A Person who looks upon the stories of ghosts and spectres as fabulous, must, I think, be an athiest or a deist; for, not only the historians, to whom we may join the poets, and divines; but likewise the philosophers of antiquity have favoured this opinion. Lucretius himself, though by the course of his philosophy, he was obliged to maintain, that the soul did not exist, separate from the body, makes no doubt of the reality of apparitions, and that men have very often appeared after their death: he was so pressed with the matter of fact, which he could not have the confidence to deny that he was forced to account for it by one of the most absurd, unphilosophical notions that ever was started.

He tells us, that the surfaces of all bodies are perpetually flying off from their respective bodies, one after another; and that these surfaces, or thin cases, that included each other, whilst they were joined in the body, like the coats of an onion, are sometimes seen entire when they are separated from it; by which means we often behold the shapes and shadows of persons, who are either dead, or absent. Monstrously absurd!

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If any man shall think these facts incredible, which I am going to relate, let him enjoy his own Opinion to himself, but let him not endeavour to disturb the belief of others, who, by instances of this nature, are excited to the study of virtue; and to avoid that rock on which my bark is split.

However atheists, deists, and free-thinkers, may ridicule the notion of ghosts and apparitions, every true believer of the christian religion, cannot doubt the reality of such appearances; as the holy scriptures abound with authorities in support of them; nor indeed, is prophane history less copious in the like accounts.

If the fields of ENDOR are not sufficient to convince unbelievers, surely the plains of PHILIPPI cannot fail of satisfying even heathens themselves in this point.

But I need not have recourse to antiquity for testimonies of this sort, since our own times, and almost every village in England can produce recent and undeniable proofs of these supernatural visitations, permitted by providence, for the discovery of truth; the exposition of some horrid crime, or as warnings to impious and guilty persons to avert, by a timely repentance, the vengeance of heaven due to their offences.

Stories like these related in the following sheets, it must be acknowledg'd, are in general, either too lightly laugh'd at, or too credulously believed. Mr. Addison's opinion



nion upon this subject is, I think, the justest I ever met with. After having rallied in a very agreeable manner, the extravagant notions of the vulgar, and the ridiculous pains they take to fright themselves out of their senses, he proceeds thus, " At the same time I think a person who is thus terrify'd with the imagination of ghosts and spectres, much more reasonable than one who, contrary to the reports of all historians, sacred and profane, ancient and modern, and to the traditions of all nations, thinks the appearance of spirits fabulous and groundless : could not I give myself up to this general testimony of mankind, I should to the relations of particular persons who are now living, and whom I cannot distrust in matters of fact. I might here add, that not only the historians, to whom we may join the poets, but likewise the philosophers of antiquity have favoured this opinion." He afterwards concludes with the following story from Josephus, which, tho' it is not of an apparition to a person awake ; yet as it is of the same extraordinary nature, I hope it may not prove unacceptable to the reader.

" Glaphyra the daughter of King Arche-laüs, after the death of her two first husbands (being married to a third, who was brother to her first husband, and so passionately in love with her that he turned off his former wife to make room for this marriage)



riage) had a very odd kind of dream. She fancied that she saw her first husband coming towards her, and that she embraced him with great tenderness; when in the midst of the pleasure which she expressed at the sight of him, he reproached her after the following manner: Glaphyra, says he, *thou hast made good the old saying, that women are not to be trusted, was not I the husband of thy virginity? Have I not children by thee? How couldst thou forget our love so far as to enter into a second marriage, and after that into a third; nay, to take for thy husband a man who has so shamefully crept into the bed of his brother? However, for the sake of our past loves, I shall free thee from thy present reproach, and make thee mine for ever.*

Glaphyra told this dream to several women of her acquaintance, and died soon after. I thought this story might not be impertinent in this place, wherein I speak of those Kings: besides that, the example deserves to be taken notice of, as it contains a most certain proof of the immortality of the soul and of divine providence. If any man thinks these facts incredible, let him enjoy his own opinion to himself; but let him not endeavour to disturb the belief of others, who, by instances of this nature are excited to the study of virtue."

Ghosts



# Ghosts and Spectres,


B E I N G

A Collection of remarkable Stories  
of Apparitions, attested by People  
of undoubted Veracity.

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## S T O R Y I.

*An account of an apparition attested by the  
Rev. Mr. Ruddle, minister at Launceston  
in Cornwall.*

 N the beginning of the year 1665, a  
disease happened in this town of  
Launceston, and some of my scholars  
died of it. Among others who fell  
under it's malignity, was John Elliott, the eldest  
son of Edward Elliott of Treberse, Esq; a strip-  
ling of about sixteen years of age, but of un-  
common parts and ingenuity. At his own par-  
ticular request I preached at the funeral, which  
happened on the 20th day of June 1665. In  
my discourse I spoke some words in commenda-  
tion of the young gentleman; such as might  
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endear his memory to those that knew him, and withal tended to preserve his example to those who went to school with him, and were to continue there after him. An Ancient Gentleman, who was then in the church, was much affected with the discourse, and was often heard to repeat the same evening, one expression I then used out of Virgil.

*Et Puer ipse fuit contari dignus.*—

The reason why this grave gentleman was so concerned at the character, was a reflection he made upon a son of his own, who being about the same age, and but a few months before, not unworthy of the like character I gave of the young Mr. Elliott; was now by a strange accident quite lost as to his parents hopes, and all expectations of any farther comfort by him.

The funeral rites being over, I was no sooner come out of the church, but I found my self most courteously accosted by this old gentleman; and with an unusual importunity, almost forced against my humour to see his house that night; nor could I have rescued my self from his kindness, had not Mr. Elliott interposed and pleaded title to me for the whole day, which (as he said) he would resign to no man. Hereupon I got loose for that time, but was constrained to leave a promise behind me, to wait upon him at his own house the Monday following. This then seemed to satisfy, but before Monday came, I had a new message to request me that if it were possible I would be there the Sunday. The second attempt I resisted, by answering that it was against my convenience, and the duty which mine own people expected from me. Yet was not  
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the gentleman at rest, for he sent me another letter the Saturday by no means to fail the Monday, and so to order my business as to spend with him two or three days at least. I was indeed startled at so much eagerness, and so many dunnings for a visit, without any business; and began to suspect that there must needs be some design in the bottom of all this excess of courtesy. For I had no familiarity, scarce common acquaintance with the gentleman, or his family; nor could I imagine whence should arise such a flush of friendship on the sudden.

On the Monday I went and paid my promised devoir, and met with entertainment as free and plentiful, as the invitation was importunate. There also, I found a neighbouring minister, who pretended to call in accidentally, but by the sequel I suppose it otherwise. After dinner this brother of the coat undertook to show me the gardens, where as we were walking, he gave me the first discovery of what was mainly intended in all this treat and complement.

First he began to inform me of the infelictiy of the family in general, and then gave instance in the youngest son. He related what a hopeful sprightly lad he lately was, and how melancholick and sottish he was now grown. Then did he with much passion lament, that his ill humour should so incredibly subdue his reason; (saith he) the poor boy believes himself to be haunted with ghosts, and is confident that he meets with an evil spirit in a certain field about half a mile from this place, as often as he goes that way to school. In the midst of our discourse, the old gentleman and his lady (as observing their cue most exactly) came up to us. Upon their Approach, and pointing me to the  
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arbour, the parson renews the relation to me, and they (the parents of the youth) confirmed what he said, and added many minute circumstances, in a long narrative of the whole: In fine they all three desired my thoughts and advice in the affair.

I was not able to collect my thoughts enough on the sudden, to frame a judgment upon what they had said. Only I answered, that the thing which the youth reported to them, was strange, yet not incredible, and that I knew not then what to think or say of it, but if the lad would be free to me in talk, and trust me with his counsels, I had hopes to give them a better account of my opinion the next day.

I had no sooner spoken so much, but I perceived my self in the springe their courtship had laid for me; for the old lady was not able to hide her impatience, but her son must be call'd immediately; this I was forced to comply with, and consent to, so that drawing off from the company to an orchard hard by, she went herself, and brought him to me, and left him with me.

It was the main drift of all these three to perswade me, that either the boy was lazy, and glad of any excuse to keep from the school, or that he was in love with some wench, and ashamed to confess it; or that he had a fetch upon his father to get money and new clothes, that he might range to London after a brother he had there; and therefore they begg'd of me, to discover the root of the matter; and accordingly to dissuade, advise, or reprove him; but chiefly by all means to undeceive him, as to the fancy of ghosts and spirits.



I soon enter'd a close conference with the youth, and at first was very cautious not to displease him, but by smooth Words to ingratiate my self and get within him, for I doubted he would be too distrustful, or too reserved, But we had scarce past the first situation and began to speak to the business, before I found, that there needed no policy to skrew my self into his heart; for he most openly and with all obliging candour did aver, that he loved his book, and desired nothing more than to be bred a scholar; that he had not the least respect for any of womankind as his mother gave out; And that the only request he would make to his parents was, that they would but believe his constant assertions, concerning the woman he was disturbed with, in the field, called the Higher-Broom-Quartils. He told me with all naked freedom and a flood of tears, that his friends were unkind and unjust to him, neither to believe nor pity him; and that if any man (making a bow to me) would but go with him to the place he might be convinced that the thing was real, &c.

By this time he found me apt to compassionate his condition, and to be attentive to his relation of it; and therefore he went on in this manner.

This woman which appears to me (said he) lived a neighbour here to my father; and dyed about eight years since; her name Dorothy Dingley, of such a stature, such age, and such complexion. She never speaks to me, but passeth by hastily, and always leaves the foot path to me, and she commonly meets me twice or three times in the breadth of the field.



It was about two months before I took any notice of it, and though the shape of the face was in my memory, yet I could not recall the name of the person; but without more thoughtfulness, I did suppose it was some woman who lived thereabout, and had frequent occasion that way. Nor did I imagine any thing to the contrary, before she began to meet me constantly morning and evening, and always in the same field, and sometimes twice or thrice in the breadth of it.

The first time I took notice of her, was about a year since; and when I first began to suspect and believe it to be a ghost, I had courage enough not to be afraid; but kept it to my self a good while, and only wondred very much at it. I did often speak to it, but never had a word in answer. Then I changed my way and went to school the under horse road, and then she always met me in the narrow lane, between the quarry park and the nursery, which was worse.

At length I began to be terrified at it, and prayed continually, that God would either free me from it, or let me know the meaning of it. Night and day, sleeping and waking, the shape was ever running in my mind; and I often did repeat these places of scripture (with that he takes a small bible out of his pocket) Job. 7. 14. *Thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions;* and Duet. 28. 67. *In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were evening, and at evening thou shalt say would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart, wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.* I was very much pleased with the lad's ingenuity, in the application of these pertinent scriptures to his condition, and desired him

him to proceed. (Thus said he) by degrees I grew very pensive, infomuch that it was taken notice of by all our family; whereupon being urged to it, I told my brother William of it; and he privately acquainted my father and mother; and they kept it to themselves for some time.

The success of this discovery was only this; they did sometimes laugh at me; sometimes chide me, but still commanded me to keep my school, and put such fopperies out of my head.

I did accordingly go to school often, but always met the woman in the way,

This and much more to the same purpose (yea as much as held a dialogue of near two hours) was our conference in the orchard; which ended with my proffer to him, that (without making any privy to our Intents) I would next morning, walk with him to the place about six o'clock. He was even transported with Joy at the mention of it, and replied, but will you sure, sir? Will you really, sir? Thank God, now I hope I shall be believed. From this conclusion we retired into the house.

The gentleman, his wife and Mr. William were impatient to know the event, infomuch that they came out of the parlour, into the hall to meet us; and seeing the lad look chearfully, the first complements from the old man was, come Mr. Ruddle, you have talked with Sam, I hope now he will have more wit; an idle boy, an idle boy. At these words the lad ran up the stairs to his chamber without replying; and I soon stop'd the curiosity of the three expectants, by telling them I had promis'd silence, and was resolved to be as good as my word; but when things were riper they



might know all; at present, I desired them to rest in my faithful promise, that I would do my utmost in their service, and for the good of their son. With this they were silenced, I cannot say, satisfied.

The next morning before five a Clock, the lad was in my Chamber, and very brisk; I arose and went with him. The field he led me too, I guess'd to be twenty acres, in an open country, and about three furlongs from any house. We went into the field, and had not gone above a third part, before the specter, in the shape of a Woman, with all the circumstances he had described her to me in the orchard the day before, (as much as the suddenness of its Appearance, and evanition would permit me to discover) met us and passed by. I was a little surpris'd at it; and though I had taken up a firm resolution to speak to it, yet I had not the power, nor indeed durst I look back, yet I took care not to shew any fear to my pupil and guide, and therefore only telling him, that I was satisfied in the truth of his complaint, we walked to the end of the field, and returned, nor did the ghost meet us at that time above once. I perceived in the young man a kind of boldness mixt with astonishment; the first caused by my presence, and the proof he had given of his own relation, and the other by the sight of his persecutor.

In short, we went home; I somewhat puzzled, he much animated. At our return, the gentlewoman (whose inquisitiveness had miss'd us) watch'd to speak with me, I gave her a convenience, and told her that my opinion was, that her son's complaint was nor to be slighted,  
nor



nor altogether discredited, yet that my judgement in his case was not settled. I gave her caution moreover, that the thing might not take wind, least the whole country should ring, with what we yet had no assurance of.

In this juncture of time, I had business, which would admit no delay; wherefore I went for Lancelton that evening, but promised to see them again next week. Yet I was prevented by an occasion which pleaded a sufficient excuse. For my wife was that week brought home from a neighbours house very ill. However my mind was upon the adventure; I studied the case; and about three weeks after went again; resolving by the help of God to see the utmost.

The next morning being the 27th day of July 1665. I went to the haunted field by myself and walked the breadth of it without any encounter, I returned, and took the other walk, and then the spectrum appeared to me, much about the same place I saw it before when the young gentleman was with me: in my thoughts this moved swifter than the time before, and about ten foot distant from me on my right hand; insomuch that I had not time to speak as I determined with myself before hand.

The evening of this day, the parents, the son, and myself, being in the chamber where I lay; I propounded to them, our going altogether to the place next morning, and some asseveration, that there was no danger in it, we all resolved upon it. The morning being come, least we should alarm the family of servants, they went under the pretence of seeing a field of wheat, and I took my Horse, and fetcht

a compass another way, and so met at the stile we had appointed.

Thence we all four walked leisurely into the quartils; and had past above half the field, before the ghost made its appearance. It then came over the stile just before us, and moved with that swiftness, that by the time we had gone six or seven steps it passed by. I immediately turn'd my head and ran after it, with the young man by my side; we saw, it pass over the stile at which we entred, but no farther, I stept upon the hedge at one place, he at another but could discern nothing, whereas I dare aver, that the swiftest horse in England could not have conveyed himself out of sight in that short space of time. Two things I observed in this days appearance.

1. That a spaniel dog, who followed the company unregarded, did bark and run away, as the spectrum passed by; whence 'tis easy to conclude that 'twas not our fear or fancy which made the apparition.

2. That the motion of the spectrum was not gradatim, or by steps, and moving of the feet; but a kind of gliding as children upon the ice, or a Boat down a swift river, which punctually answers the descriptions, the ancients gave of the motion of their Lemures.

But to proceed, this ocular evidence clearly convinced, but withal strangely affrighted the old gentleman and his wife; who knew this Dorothy Dingly in her life time, were at her burial, and now plainly saw her features in this present apparition. I encourag'd them as well as I could; but after this they went no more. However I was resolved to proceed, and use such lawful means as God hath discovered, and  
learned



learned men have successfully practised, in these unvulgar cases.

The next morning being Thursday, I went out very early by my self, and walked for about an hours space in meditation and prayer in the field next adjoining to the quartils. Soon after five I stept over the stile, into the disturb'd field; and had not gone above thirty or forty paces before the ghost appeared at the farther stile. I spake to it with a loud voice, in some such sentences as the way of these dealings directed me, whereupon it approached but slowly, and when I came near it moved not. I spake again and it answered, in a voice neither very audible nor Inteligible. I was not in the least terrify'd, and therefore persisted, until it spake again, and gave me satisfaction. But the work could not be finish'd at this time; wherefore the same evening an hour after sunset, it met me again near the same place, and after a few words of each side it quietly vanished, and neither doth appear since, nor ever will more, to any man's disturbance. The discourse in the morning lasted about a quarter of an hour.

These things are true, and I know them to be so with as much certainty as eyes and ears can give me, and until I can be perswaded that my senses do deceive me about their proper object; and by that perswasion deprive my self of the strongest inducement to believe the Christian Religion, I must and will assert, that these things in this paper are true.

As for the manner of my Proceeding, I find no reason to be ashamed of it, for I can justify it, to men of good principles, discretion, and

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recondite learning. Though in this case I chose to content my self in the assurance of the thing, rather than be at the unprofitable trouble to persuade others to believe it. For I know full well with what difficulty, relations of so uncommon a nature and practice, obtain belief. He that tells such a story, may expect to be dealt withal, as a traveller in Poland by the robbers, viz. first murdered and then search'd, first condemn'd for a liar, or superstitious, and then (when 'tis too late) have his reasons and proofs examined. This incredulity may be attributed,

1. To the infinite abuses of the people, and impositions upon their faith by the cunning Monks and Friars, &c. in the days of darkness and Popery. For they made apparitions as often as they pleased, and got both money and credit by quieting the *Terriculamenta Vulgi*, which their own artifice had raised.

2. To the prevailing of Somatism and the Hobbean principle in these times; which is a revival of the doctrine of the Sadduces, and as it denies the nature, so cannot consist with the apparition of spirits, of which see, *Leviath. p. 1 c. 12.*

3. To the ignorance of men in our age, in this peculiar and mysterious part of philosophy and religion, namely the communication between spirits and men. Not one scholar of ten thousand (though otherwise of excellent learning) knows any thing of it, or the way how to manage it. This ignorance breeds fear, and abhorrence of that, which otherwise might be of incomparable benefit to mankind.

But



But I being a clergyman, and young, and a stranger in these parts, do apprehend silence and secrecy to be my best security.

*In rebus abstrusissimis abundans cautela non nocet.*

## S T O R Y II.

The apparition of a Gentleman to the late reverend and learned Dr. Scott, on account of an original deed belonging to his grandson's estate:

THE doctor, as I have the story related, was sitting alone by the fire, either in his study or his parlour, in Broadstreet where he liv'd, and reading a book, his door being shut fast and lock'd; he was well assured there was no body in the room but himself, when accidentally raising his head a little, he was exceedingly surprized to see sitting in an elbow-chair, at the other side of the fire-place or chimney, an ancient grave gentleman in a black velvet gown, a lond whig, and looking with a pleasing countenance towards him (the doctor) as if just going to speak.

The doctor as we may reasonably suppose, was greatly surprized at the sight of him; and indeed the seeing him as sitting in a chair was the most likely to be surprizing; because the doctor knowing the door to be lock'd, and then seeing a man sitting in the chair, he must immediately and at first sight conclude him to be a spirit, or apparition or devil, call it as you will; had he seen him come in at the door, he might at first have supposed him to be really

a gentleman come to speak with him, and might think he had omitted fastening the door, as he intended to have done.

The doctor appeared in great disorder at the sight, as he acknowledg'd to those to whom he told the story, and from whom (says my author) I receiv'd this account, with very little remove of hands between.

The spectre it seems began, for the doctor had not courage at first, as he said, to speak to it; I say the spectre or apparition spoke first, and desired the doctor not to be frightened, not to be surprized, for that he would not do him any hurt; but that he came to him upon a matter of great importance to an injur'd family, which was in great danger of being ruin'd; and that tho' he (the doctor) was a stranger to the family, yet knowing him to be a man of integrity he had pitch'd upon him to do an act of very great charity, as well as justice; and that he could depend upon him for a punctual performance.

The doctor was not at first compos'd enough so receive the introduction of the business with a due attention; but seem'd rather inclin'd to get out of the room if he could, and once or twice made some attempt to knock for some of the family to come up, at which the apparition appear'd a little displeas'd.

But it seems he need not; for as the doctor said, he had no power to go out of the room if he had been next the door, or to knock for help if any had been at hand.

But here the apparition seeing the doctor still in confusion, desir'd him again to compose himself, for he would not do him the least injury, or offer any thing to make him uneasy; but desir'd



desir'd that he would give him leave to deliver the business he came about, which when he had heard, perhaps he would see less cause to be surprized or apprehensive than he did now.

By this time, and by the calm way of discourse above mentioned, the doctor recovered himself so much, tho' not with any kind of composure, as to speak.

In the name of God, *says the doctor*, what art thou?

I desire you would not be frighted, *says the apparition* to him again; I am a stranger to you, and if I tell you my name, you do not know it; but you may do the business without enquiring.

The doctor continued still discomposed and uneasy, and said nothing for some time.

The apparition spoke again to him not to be surprized, and received only for answer the old ignorant question,

In the name of God, what art thou?

Upon this the spectre seem'd displeased, as if the doctor had not treated him with respect; and expostulated a little with him, telling him he could have terrify'd him into a compliance, but that he chose to come calmly and quietly to him; and used some other discourses, so civil and obliging, that by this time he began to be a little more familiar, and at length the doctor ask'd,

What is it you would have with me?

At this the apparition, as if gratify'd with the question, began his story thus.

I lived in the county of——

*I do not exactly remember the county he named; but it was in some of the western counties of England.*

where I left a very good estate, which my grandson enjoys at this time. But he is sued for the possession by my two nephews, the sons of my younger brother.

*Here he gave him his own name, the name of his younger brother, and the names of his two nephews ; but I am not allow'd to publish the names in this relation, nor might it be proper for many reasons.*

The doctor then interrupted, and asked him how long the grandson had been in Possession of the estate ; which he told him was ——— years, intimating that he had been so long dead.

Then he went on, and told him, that his nephews would be too hard for his grandson in the suit, and would ouT him of the mansion-house and estate ; so that he would be in danger of being entirely ruined, and his family be reduced.

Still the doctor could not see into the matter, or what he could do to help or remedy the evil that threaten'd the family ; and therefore asked him some questions, for now they began to be a little better acquainted than at first.

*Says the doctor,* And what am I able to do in it, if the law be against him ?

*Why, says the Spectre,* it is not that the nephews have any right ; but the grand deed of settlement, being the conveyance of the inheritance, is lost ; and for want of that deed they will not be able to make out their title to the estate.

*Well, says the doctor,* and still what can I do in the case ?

*Why, says the Spectre,* if you will go down to my grandson's house, and take such persons with



with you as you can trust, I will give you such instructions as that you shall find out the deed or settlement, which lies concealed in a place where I put it with my own hands, and where you shall direct my grandson to take it out in your presence.

But why then can you not direct your grandson himself to do this? *says the doctor.*

Ask me not about that, *says the apparition*; there are divers reasons which you may know hereafter. I can depend upon your honesty in it, in the mean time, and I will so dispose matters that you shall have your expences paid you, and be handsomely allow'd for your trouble.

After this discourse, and several other expostulations, (for the doctor was not easily prevail'd upon to go 'till the spectre seemed to look angrily, and even to threaten him for refusing,) he did at last promise to go.

Having obtain'd a promise of him, he told him he might let his grandson know that he had formerly conversed with his grandfather, (but not how lately, or in what manner,) and ask to see the house; and that in such an upper room or loft, he should find a great deal of old lumber, old coffers, old chests, and such things as were out of fashion now, thrown by, and pil'd up upon one another, to make room for modish furniture, cabinets, chests of drawers, and the like.

That in such a particular corner was such a certain old chest, with an old broken lock upon it, and a key in it, which could neither be turn'd in the lock, or pulled out of it.

In that chest, *says he*, and in that place, lyes the grand deed, or charter of the estate, which

which conveys the inheritance, and without which the family will be ruin'd, and turn'd out of doors.

After this discourse, and the doctor promising to go down into the country and dispatch this important commission; the apparition putting on a very pleasant and smiling aspect, thank'd him, and disappear'd.

After some days, and within the time limited by the proposal of the spectre, the doctor went down accordingly into ———shire; and finding the gentleman's house very readily, by the direction, knocked at the door, and asked if he was at home; and after being told he was, and the servants telling their master it was a clergyman, the Gentleman came to the door, and very courteously invited him in.

After the doctor had been there some time, he observed the gentleman received him with an unexpected civility, tho' a stranger, and without business: They entered into many friendly discourses, and the doctor pretended to have heard much of the family, (as, indeed, he had) and of his grandfather; from whom, sir, *says he*, I perceive the estate more immediately descends to yourself.

Ay, *says the gentleman*, and shook his head, my father died young, and my grandfather has left things so confused, that for want of one principal writing, which is not yet come to hand I have met with a great deal of trouble from a couple of cousins, my grandfather's brother's children, who have put me to a great deal of charge about it. And with that the doctor seem'd a little inquisitive.

But I hope you have got over it, sir? *says he*.

No



No truly, *says the gentleman*, to be so open with you, we shall never get quite over it unless we can find this old deed; which, however, I hope we shall find, for I intend to make a general search for it.

I wish with all my heart you may find it, sir, *says the doctor*.

I don't doubt but I shall; I had a strange dream about it but last night, *says the gentleman*.

A dream about the writing! *says the doctor*, I hope it was that you should find it then?

I dream'd, *says the gentleman*, that a strange gentleman came to me, that I had never seen in my life, and helped me to look it. I don't know but you may be the man.

I should be very glad to be the man, I am sure, *says the doctor*.

Nay, *says the gentleman*, you may be the man to help me to look it.

Ay, Sir, *says the doctor*, I may help you to look it indeed, and I'll do that too with all my heart; but I would much rather be the man that should help you to find it: pray when do you intend to make a search?

To-morrow, *says the gentleman*, I had appointed to do it.

But, *says the doctor*, in what manner do you intend to search?

Why, *says the gentleman*, 'tis all our opinions that my grandfather was so very much concerned to preserve this writing, and had so much jealousy that some that were about him would take it from him if they could, that he has hid it in some secret place; and I am resolved I'll pull half the house down but I'll find it, if it be above ground.

Truly

Truly, *says the doctor*, he may have hid it so, that you must pull the house down before you find it, and perhaps not then neither. I have known such things utterly lost, by the very care taken to preserve them.

If it was made of something the fire would not destroy, *says the gentleman*, I would burn the house down, but I would find it.

I suppose you have search'd all the old gentleman's chests, and trunks, and coffers over and over? *says the doctor*.

Ay, *says the gentleman*, and turn'd them all inside outward, and there they lie of a heap up in a great loft, or garret, with nothing in them; nay, we knock'd three or four of them in Pieces to search for private drawers, and then I burnt them for anger, tho' they were fine old cypress chests, that cost money enough when they were in fashion.

I am sorry you burnt them, *says the doctor*.

Nay, *says the gentleman*, I did not burn a scrap of them till they were all split to pieces; and it was not possible there could be any thing there.

*This made the doctor a little easy; for he began to be surprized when he told him he had split some of them out, and burnt them.*

Well, *says the doctor*, if I cannot do you any service in your search, I'll come and see you again to-morrow, and wait upon your search with my good wishes.

Nay, *says the gentleman*, I don't design to part with you; since you are so kind to offer me your help, you shall stay all night then, and be at the first of it.

The doctor had now gain'd his point so far as to make himself acquainted and desirable in the



the house, and to have a kind of intimacy ; so that tho' he made as if he would go, he did not want much entreaties to make him stay ; so he consented to lie in the house all night.

A little before evening the gentleman asked him to take a walk in his park, but he put it off with a jest ; I had rather, sir, *said he smiling*, you'd let me see this fine old mansion-house that is to be demolished to-morrow ; methinks I'd fain see the house once, before you pull it down.

With all my heart, *says the gentleman*. So he carried him immediately up stairs, shewed him all the best apartments, and all his fine furniture and pictures ; and coming to the head of the great stair-case where they came up, offered to go down again.

But, sir, *says the doctor*, shall we not go up higher ?

There's nothing there ; *says he*, but garrets and old lofts full of rubbish, and a place to go out into the turret, and the clock-house.

O, let me see it all, now we are a going, *says the doctor*, I love to see the old lofty towers and turrets, the magnificence of our ancestors, though they are out of fashion now ; pray let us see all, now we are going.

Why, it will tire you, *says the gentleman*.

No, no, *says the doctor*, if it don't tire you that have seen it so often, it won't tire me, I assure you : Pray let us go up. So away the gentleman goes, and the doctor after him.

After they had rambled over the wild part of an old built great house, which I need not describe, he passes by a great room, the door of which was open, and in it a great deal of old lumber : and what place is this, pray ? *says the doctor*,

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looking

looking in at the door, but not offering to go in.

O! that's the room, *says the gentleman softly*, because there was a servant attending them, that's the room I told you of, where all the old rubbish lay, the chests, the coffers, and the trunks; look there, see how they are piled up one upon another almost to the ceiling.

With this the doctor goes in and looks about him; for this was the place he was directed to and which he wanted to see: he was not in the room two minutes but he found every thing just as the spectre at London had describ'd, went directly to the pile he had been told of, and fixes his eye upon the very chest with the old rusty lock upon it, with the key in it, which would neither turn round, nor come out.

On my word, sir, *says the doctor*, you have taken pains enough, if you have rumaged all these drawers, and chests, and coffers, and every thing that may have been in them.

Indeed sir, *says the gentleman*, I have emptied every one of them myself, and look'd over all the old musty writings one by one; with some help, indeed; but they, every one past thro' my own hand, and under my eye.

Well, sir, *says the doctor*, I see you have been in earnest, and I find the thing is of great consequence to you: I have a strange fancy come into my head this very moment; will you gratify my curiosity with but opening and emptying one small chest or coffer that I have cast my eye upon? there may be nothing in it, for you are satisfy'd, I believe, that I was never here before; but I have a strange notion that there are some private places in it which you have not found; perhaps there may be nothing in them, when they are found.

The



The gentleman looks at the chest smiling, I remember opening it very well ; and turning to his servant, Will, *says he*, don't you remember that chest? yes, sir, *says Will*, very well, I remember you were so weary you sat down upon the chest when every thing was out of it, you clap'd down the lid, and sat down, and sent me to my lady to bring you a dram of citron; you said you were so tired you was ready to faint.

Well, sir, 'twas only a fancy of mine, and very likely to have nothing in it.

'Tis no mater for that, *says the gentleman*, you shall see it turn'd bottom up again before your face, and so you shall all the rest, if you do but speak the word.

Well, sir, *says the doctor*, if you will oblige me but with that one, I will trouble you no farther.

Immediately the gentleman causes the coffer to be drag'd out and open'd; for it would not be lock'd, the key would neither lock it nor unlock it: when the papers were all out, the doctor turning his face another way, as if he would look among the papers, but taking little or no notice of the chest, stoop'd down, and as if supporting himself with his cane, chops his cane into the chest, but snatcht it out again hastily, as if it had been a mistake, and turning to the chest he claps the lid of it down, and sits down upon it, as if he was a weary too.

However he takes an opportunity to speak to the Gentleman softly, to send away his man, a moment; for I would speak a word or two with you, sir, *says he*, out of his hearing; and then recollecting himself, sir, *says he aloud*, can you not send for a hammer and a chisel?

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Yes,

The

Yes, fir, *says the gentleman.* Go *Will*, *says he to his man*, fetch a hammer and chisel.

As soon as *Will* was gone, Now, fir, *says he*, let me say a bold word to you ; I have found your writing ; I have found your grand deed of settlement ; I'll lay you a hundred guineas I have it in this coffer ?

The gentleman takes up the lid again, handles the chest, looks over every part of it ; but could see nothing ; he is confounded and amazed ! What do ye mean ? *says he to the doctor*, you have no unusual art I hope, no conjuring in hand ; here's nothing but an empty coffer ?

Not I upon my word, *says the doctor*, I am no Magician, no Cunning-Man, I abhor it ; but I tell you again the Writing is in this coffer.

The gentleman knocks, and calls as if he was frightened, for his man with a hammer, but the doctor sat composed again upon the lid of the coffer.

At last up comes the man with the hammer and chisel, and the doctor goes to work with the chest, knocks upon the flat of the bottom: *bark!* *says he* *don't you bear it, fir*, *says he*, *don't you bear it plainly?*

Hear what ? *says the gentleman.* I don't understand you, indeed.

Why the chest has a double Bottom, fir, a false Bottom, *says the doctor* ; don't you hear it sound hollow ?

In a word, they immediately split the inner Bottom open, and there lay the parchment spread abroad flat on the whole breadth of the Bottom of the trunk, as a quire of paper is laid on the flat of a drawer.



It is impossible for me to describe the joy and surprize of the gentleman, and soon after of the whole family; for the gentleman sent for his lady, and two of his daughters, up into the garret among all the Rubbish, to see not the writing only, but the Place where it was found, and the manner how.

You may easily suppose the doctor was caressed with uncommon civilities in the family, and sent up (after about a week's stay) in the gentleman's own coach to London. I do not remember whether he disclosed the secret to the gentleman or no: I mean the secret of the apparition, by which the place where the writing was to be found, was discovered to him, and who obliged him to come down on purpose to find it: I say, I do not remember that part, neither is it material. As far as I have had the story related, so far I have handed it forward; and I have the truth of it affirmed in such a manner that I cannot doubt it.

### S T O R Y. III.

A soldier in colonel Venables regiment that came out of Ireland, looked melancholy and pined, and grew so pale and thin, that he was worn almost to a skeleton. His officer, thinking the poor fellow might have some cause for grief which it might be in his power to remove, kindly urged him to declare what it was that made him so wretched; and at last, the soldier, unable longer to endure the racking torments of his own mind, made a confession to his captain, that he formerly had been a servant to a man that carried about stockings and such ware to sell; and that for his money he had murdered

dered his master, and buried him in such a place; that he had immediately fled into Ireland, and enlisted himself for a soldier; that he had never enjoyed any happy hours, but particularly from the time he had landed in England; that he had every night been haunted with the ghost of his master; who said to him, "Wilt thou not yet confess thy wicked murder." He added, that he was now glad to suffer death at once, in order to avoid the lingering punishment of wasting by degrees under excessive tortures. He afterwards made a proper confession before a magistrate: the body was searched for and found, and the man was hanged in chains where the murder was committed.

#### S T O R Y IV.

**A** Traveller was found murdered near Itzhow in Denmark; and because the murderer was unknown, the magistrates caused the hand of the slain to be cut off, and hung up by a string to the top of a room in the town-prison. Ten years after, the murderer came into that room, having been taken up for some very slight offence, and the hand immediately began to drop blood upon the table that stood underneath it. The goaler on that, accused the prisoner with the murder, who struck with the apparent judgment of God, in the discovery of it, confessed the fact, and submitted to the punishment so justly due to his crime.

#### S T O R Y V.

**I**N the northern part of England (I think in Lancashire: for I had the story from a clergyman of that country) the minister before he began



gan to read prayers at church, saw a paper lying in his book, which he supposed to be the banns of marriage. He opened it, and saw written in a fair and distinct hand, words to the following purpose, " That John P. and James D. had murdered a travelling man, had robbed him of his effects, and buried him in such an orchard," The minister was extremely startled, and asked his clerk hastily, if he had placed any paper in the prayer-book. The clerk declared he had not; but the minister prudently concealed the contents of the paper, for the two names therein contained were those of the clerk, and the sexton of the church.

The minister then went directly to a magistrate, told him what had happened, and took the paper out of his pocket to read it, when to his great surprize nothing appeared thereon, but it was a plain piece of white paper! The justice on that accused the minister of whim and fancy, and said that his head must certainly have been disordered, when he imagined such strange contents on a blank piece of paper. The good clergyman, plainly saw the hand of God in this matter, and by earnest intreaties, prevailed on the justice, to grant his warrant against the clerk and sexton; who were taken up on suspicion, and separately confined and examined; when so many contradictions appeared in their examination; for the sexton, who kept an alehouse, owned the having lodged such a man at his house, and the clerk said, he was that evening at the sexton's, but no such man was there, that it was thought proper to search their houses, in which were found several pieces of gold, and some goods belonging to men that travel the country; yet they gave so tolerable an account of these, that

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no positive proof could be made out, till the clergyman, recollecting, that the paper mentioned the dead body to be buried in such an orchard, a circumstance which had before slipped his memory, the place was searched, and the body was found: on hearing which, the sexton confessed the fact, accusing the clerk as his accomplice, and they were both accordingly executed.

## S T O R Y VI.

**A** Man was taken up on suspicion of murder, but when brought to the bar, the evidence appeared not strong enough to convict him. He behaved with great apparent boldness, for he knew there were no witnesses to the fact; and he had also taken all necessary caution to prevent a discovery. But the judge observed in the man's countenance, a terror and confusion, which his pretended boldness could not hide, and therefore kept his eye steadily fixt on him the whole time. As soon as the last witness was dismissed, the man asked, if they had any more evidence against him; when the judge looking sternly at him, asked him if he did not himself know of one more that could appear against him, whose presence would put the matter out of doubt. On which the man started and cried out, "My lord, he is not a legal witness, no man can speak in his own cause, nor was the wound I gave him half so large, as what he shews against me." The judge presently perceived by the man's starting, and the wildness and terror of his look, that he either saw the ghost of the murdered man, or that his imagination had from his guilty conscience formed such

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such an appearance; and therefore making the proper answers from such a supposition, he soon brought the murderer to confess the fact, for which he was condemned, and hanged in chains, at the place where he declared the murder was committed. At his death he averred, that the ghost of the murdered person had appeared before his eyes at his trial. *Moretus*, p. 101.

## S T O R Y VII:

**A** Gentleman in good circumstances about the year 1640, murdered his friend, a man in business, near Bow-church in Cheapside; and with such circumstances of malice, revenge and cruelty, as made it impossible for him to expect any mercy. He therefore made his escape into France, where he lived for some years: But from the horrors of his guilty conscience, which almost every night presented before his eyes, whether sleeping or waking, his murdered friend, he felt ten-fold the punishment, which, by flight, he vainly hoped to escape. After twenty years residence, or rather wandering abroad, through most part of Europe, he resolved to venture back into England. He changed his name; and as time, and the change of climates had altered his person, he doubted not but he might in some retired part of his own country, wear out the remainder of his days; and perhaps, recover that peace of mind, which he had there left behind him. But publick justice, though slow, at last overtook him: For the very evening that he landed in a wherry at Queenhithe-stairs, walking up to Cheapside, in order to get into a coach, just in the dusk, and by the very door of his murdered friend, he heard a voice

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cry

cry out, " Stop him, stop him, there he is." On this he ran as fast as he was able, and soon found himself followed by a large mob. He was quickly overtaken and seized, on which he cried out, " I confess the fact, I am the man " that did it." The mob on that said, as he had confessed the crime, they would proceed to execution ; and, after making him refund the stolen goods, would give him the discipline of pumping, kenneling and the like: on which he said he had stolen nothing, for though he had murdered Mr. L——, yet he had no intention of robbing his house. By this answer the mob, found themselves mistaken, for they were pursuing a pickpocket, and seeing this man run hard, believed him to be the pickpocket ; but now were for letting him go as a person distracted, that knew not what he said. One man however who lived in that neighbourhood, and had heard of the murder of Mr. L——, desired that this gentleman might be examined before a magistrate, and he was accordingly carried before the Lord-Mayor, who took his confession of the fact, for which he was soon after hanged : and he declared at the gallows, that the day of his execution, was the happiest day he had known since he had committed that horrid, treacherous, inhuman act, the murder of a friend, who loved him, and to whom he lay under the highest obligations. [*Moretus's secrets of the invisible world* disclosed. p. 105.]



## S T O R Y VIII.

**I**N the reign of King James I. one Ann Waters having an unlawful and wanton intercourse with a young man in the neighbourhood ; and finding her husband some embarrassment to their wicked pleasures, determined to put him out of the way ; and accordingly one night, assisted by her paramour, she strangled her husband, and they buried his body under a dung-hill in the cow-house. The man was missing, and his wife made such a lamentation about him, that the people greatly pitied her, and gave her all the assistance in their power in searching for her husband ; but as she knew where she had laid him, she took care to direct their search far from the place where her barbarity would have been discovered.

After the search was at an end, and it was imagined, that the man might be gone away for debt, without acquainting his wife with his intentions ; a woman in the neighbourhood dreamt that a stranger told her, that Ann Waters had strangled her husband, and hid him under the dunghill. She at first disregarded the dream, but it being repeated several nights, it began publicly to be talked of ; and at length they got authority to search the dunghill, where the dead body was found ; and other concurrent circumstances appearing, the wife was apprehended and convicted of the murder, which before her execution she confessed, and impeached the young fellow, her accomplice : he, on her being apprehended, immediately fled, but was pursued and taken, and on his own confession was also executed

for the murder. Ann Waters was burnt, and her paramour was hang'd in chains.

[*Turner* 29. *Wanly's wonders*, &c. l. 1. c. 41. p. 90. *Baker's Chron.* p. 614.]

## S T O R Y IX.

**I**N the year 1690, a man in Ireland dreamed that he was riding out with a relation of his, who lived at Amesbury, in Wiltshire, on the downs near that town; and that his relation was robbed and murdered by two men, whose persons and drefs he perfectly remembered. His dream was so strong, that he wrote to his cousin at Amesbury, begging him not to ride late, and then related the dream he had had concerning him. The man received the letter, but laughed at the caution; and the next night on the very spot therein mentioned, he was both robbed and murdered. His wife extremely afflicted for his loss, shewed this letter to her friends, and from the exact description of the murderers they were taken up, separately confined, and by their equivocal and contradictory answers, some of the murdered man's things being also found upon them, they were convicted, and hanged in chains on the spot where the murder was committed.

[*Turner*, p. 54.]

## S T O R Y X.

**T**WO Arcadians of intimate acquaintance, lodged at Mægara. One at a friend's house; the other at an inn. He that lodged with his friend, saw in his sleep, his companion sup-  
plicating



cating his host not to kill him; and heard his voice begging him to come to his assistance. Suddenly awaking, he started from his bed, and was hastily running out of the room; but recollecting his senses, he found he had only been in a dream, he therefore returned to his bed, and composed himself again to sleep. His friend again appeared to him with several wounds in his body, and said, "Since you could not prevent my murder, yet I conjure you to revenge it. My host has killed me, and has laid my body at the bottom of a dung-cart, and is now carrying it out of the west gate of the city." The man at this suddenly awaked again, and putting on his clothes, ran hastily to the western gate, where he overtook the cart, and under a heap of dung, found the mangled body of his murdered friend. The inn-keeper was seized, and suffered the punishment he so well deserved.

[Turner 49. Valer Maxim. 1. c. 7. Dr. Moore Immort. of the soul. 1. 2. c. 16.].

## S T O R Y XI.

**I**N the west of England a man had been murdered, but four years had passed, and the murderer had not been discovered. In a large company of men met together at an ordinary, one of them looking earnestly at a grazier, cry'd out, "You are the man, sir, that four years ago killed farmer W ——" The grazier turn'd as pale as death, and stagger'd so, that he was forced to sit down in a chair. The company gathered round him, and ask'd him, if the accusation was just. He fell on his knees, and with great contrition and tears, confessed the fact, and was condemned and executed for the same.

same. The person who taxed the grazier with the murder, being asked on what foundation he had accused him, declared, that it was no other than a strong and sudden impulse, which he could not resist, although his life might have paid the forfeit for his speech.

This story was given me by a reverend clergyman of Wiltshire.

## S T O R Y XII.

**A** Gentleman of high rank and fortune abroad, had invited several officers to dine with him, (amongst which was the father of the gentleman who told me the story) and just as they sat down to the table, one of the officers looking up, cry'd out " Good God! I am a dead man, take her away, for pity's sake take her away, for " I cannot bear that look." And he immediately fell from his chair in a fit upon the floor. They gave him all proper assistance, and recovered him enough to place him again on his seat, when looking to the same side of the room, he again cry'd out, " There she is still, take her away or I shall confess all, and suffer the punishment I so well deserve." He then fell into a stronger fit than before; and the gentleman of the house having great compassion for the poor man, and thinking he was seized with a frenzy fever, ordered him to be carried up stairs, and put to bed, and sent to the next town, which was six miles off, for a surgeon to let him blood.

One



One of the company observing, that his agonies came on, and by his looking up at a picture which hung in the room, asked the gentleman of the house, whose picture it was? to which he answered, That it was the picture of a young lady, who about two years before had been found murdered in her bed, and her house robbed of all the most valuable effects in it; that there never had yet been the least trace to find out the murderer: that all the remainder of her furniture had been publickly sold, and that he had bought that portrait as being well drawn, and the representation of a fine woman. The gentleman of the house then asked the other officers, what they knew of the man who was gone to bed in a fit, for he had only invited him out of civility to the rest of the gentlemen of the regiment. They declared they knew nothing of his family, but that he had lately bought a pair of colours.

As soon as the surgeon arrived, he blooded the sick man, who again came to his senses; and being asked, what had given him so much uneasiness, he looked wildly, would give no answer, and only muttered that he was subject to such fits; but looking up earnestly in the surgeon's face, he seem'd in great confusion, and they apprehended, was again falling into a fit. The gentleman of the house taking the surgeon apart, asked him, If he knew the person he had bled? The surgeon answered, that he believed he did not know him, for he heard he was an officer in the army; whereas he should otherwise have taken him for a strolling idle fellow, that he once remembered to have seen, who was not likely, either by his birth or fortune, to bear the king's commission. The gentleman desired the surgeon  
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to go to him again, and to accost him by the name of that vagabond, to see what effect it would have on him, and if it was a mistake, it was easy to ask his pardon, and it would soon be made up. The surgeon returning into the room, came familiarly up to the officer, who was still in bed, took him by the hand and said, "How is it Pedro? I little thought to have seen you here, nor knew you just now while you was in your fit." On which he cried out, "Well, since I find I am discovered, I will confess all, if you will not let me look on that face in the parlour any more." He accordingly, before the gentleman of the house, made a full confession of his having entered the house of the lady, whose picture had so terrified him, and by the help of one of her servants, whom he killed and buried in the cellar, and who, it was supposed, was fled for the robbery and murder; had rifled the house, and murdered the lady. That he found five hundred pound in gold in her bureau, with which he equipped himself for the army; but all her jewels, plate, &c. he had buried for fear of a discovery, in a place, where by his direction, they were all found; as was also the bones of the murdered servant in the cellar. He was accordingly executed for the same.

### S T O R Y XIII.

**I**N the year 1611, Sir Thomas Glover, then being our ambassador at Constantinople, some of his servants were one day diverting themselves with throwing snow-balls, when one of the ambassador's servants threw a ball, which hit a Turk such a blow on the eye, that it struck him instantly dead.

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The aga of the janisaries complained to the grand visier, and the grand visier demanded the servant of the ambassador to be given up to public justice.

It was in vain that the ambassador urged that the blow was given by accident, and not by design; for the grand visier insisted that he would have blood for blood, which is a law never dispensed with among the Turks. The ambassador then declared, that he knew not which of his servants to deliver up, for he could not discover by whose hand the ball had been thrown; but to prevent a tumult which seemed beginning to arise (and the end of which might have reached even to the throne) he ordered all his servants to appear, and promised to give up the man that should be pronounced guilty. Five or six Turks instantly seized on one Simon Dibbins, a man newly come from Candia, and the rest of the janisaries, with one voice, declared him to be the guilty man.

The ambassador, knowing this man to have been absent from the place when the snow-ball was thrown, again protested with great vehemence against his execution: but finding that neither intreaties, nor great sums of money which were offered, could prevail for his enlargement, after they had once seized on him, he thought it was better that one man (innocent as he thought him) should suffer, than by any farther opposition, to run the risque of losing many lives by a general insurrection.

The day of his execution being fixed, the ambassador sent his chaplain to him in prison, and Dibbins then confessed, that he had, some years before, killed a man in England, and for fear of

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detection

detection, had fled to Candia; but he said, he was now convinced, that the general out-cry against him was the voice of God, by that means to bring him to justice, for a most bloody and premeditated murder.

He was accordingly executed before the gate of the ambassador's house, who from the account given by his chaplain, was very well satisfied to find, that, by the death of Dibbins, a murderer was punished, and an innocent man who was only the accidental cause of a Turk's death, was saved from a sentence which would have been as hard on him, as it was just on the wretch who suffered no more than he really deserved.

*Knowle's Turkish Hist. p. 134.*

#### S T O R Y XIV.

The account of the apparition of sir George Villers, relating to the murder of the duke of Buckingham his son, as taken from the lord Clarendon's history of the rebellion is as follows. \*

**T**HERE were many stories scatter'd abroad at that time of several prophecies and predictions of the duke's untimely and violent death; amongst the rest, there was one which was upon a better foundation of credit than usually such discourses are founded.

There was an officer in the king's wardrobe in Windsor-Castle, of a good reputation for honesty and discretion, and then about the age of fifty years or more.

This

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\* The copper-plate on the title-page, is a lively representation of this story.



This man had in his youth been bred in a school in the parish where sir George Villers, the father of the duke, lived, and had been much cherished and obliged in that season of his age by the said sir George, whom afterwards he never saw.

About six months before the miserable end of the duke of Buckingham, about midnight, this man being in his bed at Windsor, where his office was, and in very good health, there appeared to him on the side of his bed, a man of a very venerable aspect, who drew the curtains of his bed, and fixing his Eyes upon him, asked him if he knew him.

The poor man, half dead with fear and apprehension, being ask'd the second time, whether he remembred him, and having in that time called to his memory the presence of sir George Villers, and the very cloaths he used to wear, in which at that time he seem'd to be habited, he answered him, that he thought him to be that person; he replied, he was in the right, that he was the same, and that he expected a service from him, which was, that he should go from him, to his son the duke of Buckingham, and tell him, if he did not somewhat to ingratiate himself to the people, or at least to abate the extreme malice which they had against him, he would be suffered to live but a short time.

After this discourse he disappeared, and the poor man (if he had been at all waking) slept very well 'till morning, when he believed all this to be a Dream, and considered it no otherwise.

The next night, or shortly after, the same person appeared to him again, in the same place, and about the same time of the night, with an aspect a little more severe than before, and asked him, whether he had done as he had required of him; and perceiving he had not, gave him very severe reprehensions, told him he expected more compliance from him, and that if he did not perform his commands, he should enjoy no peace of mind; but should always be pursu'd by him: Upon which, he promised him to obey. But the next morning, waking out of a good sleep, tho' he was exceedingly perplexed with the lively representation of all particulars to his memory, he was still willing to persuade himself that that he had only dreamed, and considered that he was a person at such a distance from the duke; that he knew not how to find out any admission to his presence, much less had any hope to be believed in what he should say; so with great trouble and inquietness he spent some time in thinking what he should do: and in the end resolved to do nothing in the matter.

The same person appeared to him the third time with a terrible countenance, and bitterly reproaching him for not performing what he had promised to do. The poor man had, by this time, recovered the courage to tell him, that in truth he had deferred the execution of his commands, upon considering how difficult a thing it would be for him to get any access to the duke, having acquaintance with no person about him; and if he should obtain admission to him, he should never be able to persuade him that he was sent in such a manner;



ner ; that he should at least be thought to be mad, or to be set on and employed by his own, or the malice of other men to abuse the duke ; and so he should be sure to be undone.

The person reply'd, as he had done before, that he should never find rest 'till he should perform what he required, and therefore he were better to dispatch it ; that the access to his son was known to be very easy, and that few men waited long for him ; and for the gaining him credit, he would tell him two or three particulars, which he charged him never to mention to any person living but to the duke himself ; and he should no sooner hear them but he should believe all the rest he should say ; and so repeating his threats, he left him.

In the morning the poor man, more confirmed by the last appearance, made his journey to London, where the court then was ; he was very well known to sir Ralph Freeman, one of the masters of requests, who had married a lady that was nearly allyed to the duke, and was himself well received by him : To him this man went, and tho' he did not acquaint him with all the particulars, he said enough to let him know there was something extraordinary in it ; and the knowledge he had of the sobriety and discretion of the man, made the more impression on him : He desired that by his means he might be brought to the duke in such a place and in such a manner as should be thought fit, affirming that he had much to say to him, and of such a nature as would require much privacy, and some time and patience in the hearing.

Sir

Sir Ralph promised he would speak first with the duke of him, and then he should understand his pleasure; and accordingly, the first opportunity he did inform him of the reputation and honesty of the man, and then what he desired, and of all he knew of the matter.

The duke, according to his usual openness and condescension, told him, that he was the next day early to hunt with the king; that his horses should attend him at Lambeth-Bridge, where he should land by five of the clock in the morning; and if the man attended him there at that hour, he would walk and speak with him as long as should be necessary.

Sir Ralph carried the man with him the next morning, and presented him to the duke at his landing, who received him courteously, and walked aside in conference near an hour; none but his own servants being at that hour in that place; and they and sir Ralph at such a distance, that they could not hear a word, tho' the duke sometimes spoke loud, and with great commotion, which sir Ralph the more easily observed and perceived, because he kept his eyes always fixed upon the duke, having procured the conference upon somewhat he knew there was of extraordinary.

The man told him, in his return over the water, that when he mentioned those particulars which were to gain him credit, (the substance whereof he said he durst not impart unto him) the duke's colour changed, and he swore he could come at that knowledge only by the devil, for that those particulars were only known to himself and to one person more, who he was sure would never speak of it.

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The duke pursued his purpose of hunting, but was observed to ride all the morning with great pensiveness and in deep thoughts, without any delight in the exercise he was upon; and before the morning was spent, left the field, and alighted at his mother's lodgings in Whitehall, with whom he was shut up for the space of two or three hours; the noise of their discourse frequently reaching the ears of those who attended in the next rooms. And when the duke left her, his countenance appeared full of trouble, with a mixture of anger; a countenance that was never before observed in him in any conversation with her towards whom he had a profound reverence; and the countess herself (for though she was married to a private gentleman, Sir Thomas Compton, she had been created countess of Buckingham shortly after her son had first assumed that title) was at the duke's leaving her found overwhelmed in Tears, and in the highest agony imaginable.

Whatever there was of all this, it is notorious truth, that when the news of the duke's murder (which happened within a few months after) was brought to his mother, she seemed not in the least degree surprized, but received it as she had foreseen it; nor did afterwards express such a degree of sorrow as was expected from such a mother for the loss of such a son.

\* This story is related with some little circumstantial

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\* Fame, though with some privacy, says, that the secret token was an incestuous breach of modesty between

stantial difference by several considerable authors, who all seem to agree in the most material parts of it.

## S T O R Y XV.

The learned Dr. Isaac Walton, in his account of the life of Dr. Donne, gives the following remarkable story.

**D**R. Donne and his wife living with sir Robert Drury, who gave them a free entertainment at his house in Drury-Lane ; it happened that the lord Haye was by King James sent on an ambassy to the French King Henry IV. whom sir Robert resolved to accompany, and engaged Dr. Donne to go with them, whose wife was then with child at sir Robert's House. Two days after their arrival at Paris, Dr. Donne was left alone in that room, in which Sir Robert and he, and some other friends, had dined together. To this place Sir Robert returned within half an hour ; and as he left, so he found Dr. Donne alone, but in such confusion, and so altered in his looks, as amazed Sir Robert to behold him, insomuch that

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tween the duke and a certain lady too nearly related to him, which it surprized the duke to hear of ; and that as he thought he had good reasons to be sure the lady would not tell it of herself, so he thought none but the devil could tell it besides her ; and this astonished him, so that he was very far from receiving the man slightly, or laughing at his message.



that he earnestly desired Dr. Donne to declare what had befallen him in the short time of his absence? To which Dr. Donne was not able to make a present answer; but after a long and perplexed pause, did at last say, I have seen a dreadful vision; since I saw you, I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me, through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms; this I have seen since I saw you. To which Sir Robert reply'd, Sure, Sir, you have slept, since I saw you, and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake. To which Dr. Donne's reply was, I cannot be surer that I now live, than that I have not slept since I saw you, and am as sure at her second appearing she stopped and looked me in the face and vanished. Rest and sleep had not altered Dr. Donne's opinion the next day; for he then affirmed this vision with a more deliberate, and so confirmed a confidence, that he inclined Sir Robert to a faint belief that the vision was true, who immediately sent a servant to Drury - House, with a charge to hasten back and bring him word whether Mrs. Donne were alive; and if alive, what condition she was in as to her health. The twelfth day the messenger returned with this account: That he found and left Mrs. Donne very sad and sick in bed, and that after a long and dangerous labour, she had been delivered of a dead child, and upon examination the abortion proved to be the same day, and about the very hour, that Dr. Donne affirmed he saw her pass by in his chamber. Mr. Walton adds this as a relation, which will beget some wonder, and well it may, for most of our world are

at present possessed with an opinion, that visions and miracles are ceased ; and though it is most certain that two lutes, being both strong and tuned to an equal pitch, and then one play'd upon, the other, that is not touched, being laid upon the table at a fit distance will (like an eccho to a trumpet) warble a faint audible harmony in answer to the same tune, yet many will not believe that there is any such thing as a sympathy with souls, &c.

### S T O R Y XVI.

The following account was communicated by sir Charles Lee, to the lord bishop of Gloucester, and afterwards published by Mr. Beaumont in his treatise of spirits.

**S**IR Charles Lee, by his first lady, had only one daughter, of which she died in child-birth ; and when she died, her sister, the lady Everard desired to have the education of the child ; and she was by her very well educated, till she was marriageable ; and a match was concluded for her with sir William Perkins, but was then prevented in an extraordinary manner. Upon a thursday night she thinking she saw a light in her chamber after she was in bed, knock'd for her maid, who presently came to her ; and she asked why she left a candle burning in her chamber ? The maid said she left none, and there was none, but what she brought with her at that time. Then she said it was the fire : but that the maid told her was quite out, and said she believed it was only a dream ; whereupon she said it might be so, and composed her-



herself again to sleep; but about two of the clock she was awaked again, and saw the apparition of a little woman between her curtain and her pillow, who told her she was her mother, and that she was happy, and that by twelve of the clock that day, she should be with her; whereupon she knocked again for her maid, called for her cloaths, and when she was dressed, went into her closet, and came not out again till nine; and then brought out with her a letter sealed to her father, brought it to her aunt, the lady Everard, told her what had happened, and desired, that as soon as she was dead, it might be sent to him; but the lady thought she was suddenly fallen mad, and thereupon sent presently away to Chelmsford for a physician and surgeon, who both came immediately; but the physician could discern no indication of what the lady imagined, or of any indisposition of her body; notwithstanding the lady would needs have her let blood, which was done accordingly; and when the young woman had patiently let them do what they would with her, she desired that the chaplain might be called to read prayers, and when prayers were ended, she took her Guittar and Psalm-book, and sat down upon a chair without arms, and played and sung so melodiously and admirably, that her musick-master, who was then there, admired at it; and near the stroke of twelve, she rose and sat herself down in a great chair with arms, and presently fetching a strong breathing or two, immediately expired, and was so suddenly cold, as was much wondered at by the physician and surgeon. She died at Waltham in Essex, three miles from Chelmsford; and the letter was sent to sir Charles at his house in Warwickshire: but he was so afflicted

with the death of his daughter, that he came not till she was buried : but when he came he caused her to be taken up, and to be buried by her mother at Edmundton, as she desired in her letter. This was about the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two or sixty-three.

## S T O R Y XVII.

Mr. James Douch's account of the apparition of major Sydenham to capt. William Dyke.

**C**ONCERNING the apparition of the ghost of major George Sydenham (late of Dulverton in the county of Somerset) to captain William Dyke (late of Skilgate in this county also, and now likewise deceased) be pleased to take the relation of it as I have it from the worthy and learned dr. Tho. Dyke, a near kinsman of the captains, thus : shortly after the majors death, the doctor was desired to come to the house to take care of a child that was there sick, and in his way thither he called on the captain, who was very willing to wait on him to the place, because he must, as he said have gone thither that Night, though he had not met with so encouraging an opportunity. After their arrival there at the house, and the civility of the people shewn them in that entertainment, they were seasonably conducted to their lodging, which they desired might be together in the same bed ; where, after they had lain a while the captain knocked and bids the servant bring him two of the largest candles lighted that he could possibly get. Whereupon



upon the doctor enquires what he meant by this? The captain answers, you know cousin, what disputes my major and I have had touching the being of a God, and the immortality of the soul. In which points we could never yet be resolved, though we so much sought for and desired it. And therefore it was at length fully agreed between us, that he of us that dyed first should the third night after his funeral, between the hours of twelve and one, come to the little house that is here in the garden, and there give a full account to the survivor touching these matters, who should be sure to be present there at the set time, and so receive a full satisfaction. And this, says the captain, is the very night, and I am come on purpose to fulfil my promise. The doctor dissuaded him, minding him of the danger of following those strange counsels, for which we could have no warrant, and that the devil might by some cunning device make such an advantage of this rash attempt, as might work his utter ruin. The captain replies, that he had solemnly engaged, and that nothing should discourage him: and adds, That if the doctor would sit up a while with him, he would thank him, if not, he might compose himself to his rest; but for his own part he was resolved to watch, that he might be sure to be present at the hour appointed. To that purpose he sets his watch by him, and as soon as he perceived by it that it was half an hour past eleven, he rises, and takes a candle in each hand, goes out by a back door, of which he had before gotten the key, and walks to the Garden-house, where he continued two hours and an half, and at his return declared that he had neither saw nor heard any thing more than what

what was usual. But I know, said he, that my major would surely have come, had he been able.

About six weeks after the captain rides to Eaton to place his son a scholar there, when the doctor went thither with him. They lodged there at an inn, the sign was the Christopher, and tarried two or three nights, not lying together now as before at Dulverton, but in two several chambers. The morning before they went thence, the captain stayed in his chamber longer than he was wont to do before he called upon the doctor. At length he comes into the doctors chamber, but in a visage and form much differing from himself, with his hair and eyes staring, and his whole body shaking and trembling. Whereat the doctor wondering, presently demanded, what is the matter, cousin captain? The captain replies, I have seen my major. At which the doctor seeming to smile, the captain immediately confirms it, saying, If ever I saw him in my life I saw him just now. And then he related to the doctor what had passed, thus: this morning, after it was light, some one comes to my bed-side, and suddenly drawing back the curtains, calls Cap. Cap. (which was the term of familiarity that the major used to call the captain by) To whom I replied, What, my major? To which he returns, I could not come at the time appointed, but I am now come to tell you, *That there is a God, and a very just and terrible one; and if you do not turn over a new leaf* (the very expression as is by the doctor punctually remembred) *you will find it so.* (The captain proceeded.) On the table by, there lay a Sword which the major had formerly given me. Now after the apparition had walked



a turn or two about the chamber, he took up the sword, drew it out, and finding it not so clean and bright as it ought, cap. cap. says he, *this sword did not use to be kept after this manner when it was mine.* After which words he suddenly disappeared.

The captain was not only thoroughly persuaded of what he had thus seen and heard, but was from that time observed to be very much affected with it. And the humour that before in him was brisk and jovial, was then strangely altered. Infomuch as very little meat would pass down with him at dinner, though at the taking leave of their friends there was a very handsome treat provided. Yea, it was observed that what the captain had thus seen and heard had a more lasting influence upon him, and it is judged by those who were well acquainted with his conversation, that the remembrance of this passage stuck close to him, and that those words of his dead friend were frequently sounding fresh in his ears, during the remainder of his life, which was about two years.

## S T O R Y. XVIII.

The appearance of the dutches of Mazarine,  
to madam De Beauclair.

**T**HE author of the following narrative which was publish'd about two years ago, solemnly declares he is perfectly convinced of the truth of it ; as well as several other persons of undoubted credit now living.

'Tis

'Tis well known to most people acquainted with the English history, that the celebrated dutchess of Mazarine was mistress to King Charles the second. Mr. Waller particularly takes notice of her, as one of the favourites of that monarch, in the following lines.

“ When thro’ the world fair Mazarine had run,  
 “ Bright as her fellow traveller the sun,  
 “ Hither at last the Roman eagle flies,  
 “ As the last triumph of her conquering eyes.”

Madam De Beauclair, was a lady equally admired, and loved by his brother and successor James the second; between these two ladies there was an uncommon friendship, such as is rarely found in persons bred up in courts; particularly those of the same sex, and in the same circumstances.

But my author pretty justly observes, that the parity of their circumstances might contribute a good deal towards it; they having both lost their Royal Lovers, the one by death, the other by abdication. He observes, they were both Women of excellent understandings, that had enjoy’d all that the world could give them, and were (as he says) when he had the honour of first being acquainted with them, arrived at an age, that they might be supposed to despise all its pomps and vanities. I shall now without any farther introduction, give you the whole of the relation, in the gentlemen’s own words, who declares himself to be an eye witness of the truth of it.

After the burning of Whitehall, these two ladies were allotted very handsome apartments in the stable-yard, St. James’s, but the Face of  
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publick affairs being then wholly changed, and a new set of courtiers as well as rules of behaviour came into vogue, they conversed almost only with each other.

About this time it was that Reason first began to oppose itself to Faith, or at least to be set up against it by some who had an ambition to be thought more penetrating than their neighbours: — The doctrine soon spread, and was too much talked on not to be frequently a subject of conversation for these two ladies; and tho' I cannot say that either of them were thoroughly convinced by it, yet the specious arguments made use of by persons of high reputation for their learning had such an effect on both, as to raise great doubts in them concerning the immateriality of the soul, and the certainty of its existence after death. In one of the serious consultations they had together on this head, it was agreed between them, that on which ever of them the lot should fall to be first called from this world, she should return, if there was a possibility of doing so, and give the other an account in what manner she was disposed of. — This promise it seems was often repeated, and the dutchess happening to fall sick, and her life despaired of by all about her, madam de Beauclair reminded her of what she expected from her; to which her grace replied, she might depend upon her performance. These words passed between them not above an hour before the dissolution of that great lady, and were spoke before several persons who were in the room, but at that time they were far from comprehending the meaning of what they heard.

Some years after the dutchess's decease, happening, in a visit I made to madam de Beauclair, to fall on the topic of futurity ; she expressed her disbelief of it with a great deal of warmth ; which a little surprizing me, as being of a quite contrary way of thinking myself, and had always, by the religion she professed supposed her highly so; I took the liberty of offering some arguments, which, I imagined would have been convincing to prove the reasonableness of depending on a life to come ; To which she answered, that not all that the whole world could say should ever persuade her to that opinion ; and then related to me the contract made between her and her dear departed friend the dutchess of mazarine.

It was in vain I urged the strong probability there was that souls in another world might not be permitted to perform the engagements they had entered into in this, especially, when they were of a nature, repugnant to the divine Will, ——— which, said I, *has manifestly placed a flaming sword between human knowledge and the prospect of that glorious Eden, we hope, by Faith, to be the inheritors of hereafter : —* Therefore, added I, *her grace of Mazarine may be in possession of all those immense felicities which are promised to the virtuous, and even now interceding that the dear partner of her heart may share the same, yet be denied the privilege of imparting to you what she is, or that she exists at all.*

Nothing I could say made the least impression ; and I found, to my very great concern, that she was become as much an advocate for the new doctrine of non-existence after death,  
as



as any of those who had first proposed it ; on which, from that time forward, I avoided all discourse with her on that head.

It was not however many months after we had this conversation, that I happened to be at the house of a person of condition, whom, since the death of the dutchess of Mazarine, madam de Beauclair had the greatest intimacy with of any of her acquaintance. We were just set down to cards about nine o'clock in the evening, as near as I can remember, when a servant came hastily into the room, and acquainted the lady I was with, that madam de Beauclair had sent to intreat she would come that moment to her ; adding, that if she desired ever to see her more in this world, she must not delay her visit.

So odd a message might very well surprize the person to whom it was delivered ; and not knowing what to think of it, she asked, Who brought it ? And being told it was madam de Beauclair's groom of the chambers, ordered he should come in, and demanded of him, if his lady were well, or if he knew of any thing extraordinary that had happened to her, which should occasion this hasty summons ? To which he answered, That he was intirely incapable of telling her the meaning ; only as to his lady's health, he never saw nor heard her complain of any indisposition.

“ Well then, said the lady, (a little out of humour) I desire you'll make my excuse, as I have really a great cold, and am fearful the night-air may increase it, but to-morrow I will not fail to wait on her very early in the morning.”

The man being gone, we were beginning to form several conjectures on this message of madam de Beauclair, but before we had time to agree on what might be the most feasible occasion, he returned again, and with him Mrs. Ward, her woman, both seeming very much confused and out of breath.

“ O, madam, cried she, my lady expresses  
 “ an infinite concern that you refuse this request,  
 “ which she says will be her last. She says  
 “ that she is convinced of not being in a condition  
 “ to receive your visit tomorrow ; but as a to-  
 “ ken of her friendship bequeaths you this little  
 “ casket containing her watch, necklace, and  
 “ some other jewels, which she desires you will  
 “ wear in remembrance of her.”

These words were accompanied with the delivery of the legacy she mentioned, and that, as well as Mrs. Ward's words, threw us both into a consternation we were not able to express. The lady would fain have entered into some discourse with Mrs. Ward concerning the affair ; but she evaded it by saying, she had left only an under-maid with madam de Beauclair, and must return immediately ; on which the lady cry'd, all at once, “ I will go with you, there must be  
 “ something very uncommon certainly in this.” I offered to attend her, being, as well I might, desirous of getting some light into what at present appear'd so mysterious.

In fine, we went that instant, but as no mention was made of me, nor madam de Beauclair might not probably be informed I was with the lady when her servant came ; good manners and decency obliged me to wait in a lower apartment, unless she gave leave for my admittance.

She



She was however no sooner informed I was there than she desired I would come up.—I did so, and found her setting in an easy chair near her bed-side, and in my eyes, as well as all those present, seemed in as perfect health as ever she had been.

On our enquiring if she felt any inward disorder within herself, which should give room for the melancholy apprehensions her message testified, she reply'd in the negative; yet, said she, with a little sigh, you will soon, very soon, behold me pass from this world into that eternity which I once doubted, but am now assured of.

As she spoke these last words, she looked full in my face, as it were to remind me of the conversation we frequently had held together on that subject.

I told her, I was heartily glad to find so great a change in her ladyship's sentiments; but that I hoped she had no reason to imagine the conviction would be fatal: which she only answered with a gloomy smile; and a clergyman of her own persuasion, whom she had sent for, that moment coming in, we all quitted the room, to leave him at liberty to exercise his function.

It exceeded not half an hour before we were called in again, and she appeared, after having disburthened her conscience, to be more chearful than before; her eyes, which were as piercing as possible, sparkled with an uncommon vivacity; and she told us, she should die with the more satisfaction, as she enjoyed, in her last moments, the presence of two persons the most agreeable to her in this world, and in the next would be sure of enjoying the society of one, who, in life, had been the dearest to her.

We

We were both beginning to dissuade her from giving way to thoughts which there seemed not the least probability of being verify'd; when she put a stop to what we were about to urge, by saying, Talk no more of that — my time is short, and I would not have the small space allowed me to be with you wasted in vain delusion. — Know, continued she, I have seen my dear dutchess of Mazarine. — I perceived not how she entered, but turning my eyes towards yonder corner of the room, I saw her stand in the same form and habit she was accustomed to appear in when living; — fain would I have spoke, but had not the power of utterance; — she took a little circuit round the chamber, seeming rather to swim than walk; — then stopped by the side of that Indian chest, and looking on me with her usual sweetness, Beauclair, said she, between the hours of twelve and one this night you will be with me. — The surprize I was in at first, being a little abated, I began to ask some questions concerning that future world I was so soon to visit; but on the opening of my lips, for that purpose, she vanished from my sight, I know not how.

The clock was now very near striking twelve; and as she discovered not the least symptoms of any ailment, we again aimed to remove all apprehensions of a dissolution; but we had scarce begun to speak, when on a sudden her countenance changed, and she cry'd out, "O! I am sick at heart! Mrs. Ward, who all this while had stood leaning on her chair, apply'd some drops, but to no effect; she grew still worse; and in about half an hour expired, it being exactly the time the apparition had foretold.



I have been so particular in relating all the circumstances of this affair, as well to prove I could not be deceived in it, as to shew that madam de Beauclair was neither vapourish nor superstitious, as many believe all are who pretend to see any thing supernatural. I am, indeed, very ready to allow that the force of imagination may impose upon the senses, and that it frequently has done so, and that the stories told us in our infancy leave ideas behind them, which, in our riper years, are apt to make us fanciful; but in the case I have mentioned there could be nothing of all this; the lady you may perceive was so far from any apprehensions or prepossessions of that nature, that, on the contrary, she looked upon them as ridiculous and absurd, and could have been convinced by nothing but the testimony of her own eyes and ears.

It must be confessed, such extraordinary means of warning us of our fate but rarely happen, nor can it be supposed departed spirits have the power of visiting us at pleasure; for which reason I look upon all such agreements, as were made between these ladies, as highly presumptuous, and when permitted to be fulfilled, we are not to imagine it done to gratify the vain curiosity of those who doubt a future state, but to strengthen the faith of those who believe in it.

I think, therefore, whoever is well assured of the truth of such an incident, ought to communicate it to the public, especially in these times, when all the belief of another world, on which of consequence our good behaviour in this depends, stands in need of every help for maintaining any ground among us.

C O N-

## CONCLUSION.

**N**Otwithstanding the certainty of a world of spirits, and the various appearances that have upon many occasions discovered themselves to the human eye, there is a sort of visionaries and quick-sighted people in the world, that can create apparitions whenever they please; and though they may see invisible spirits in their dreams, they seldom think fit to be asleep at that time; for, if they should, the spirit might lose the reputation of being such, as well as they themselves the credit of stealing a view of it; and therefore whenever they dream of apparitions in their sleep, they must be sure to believe themselves broad awake; and then there will be the same complaisance due to them, as to a certain lady greatly troubled with the spleen, who was favoured with these appearances whenever she was pleased to indulge the humour.

She told a friend of mine, that she had lately seen a horrid spectre stand bold upright against the wainscot in her room one night as she lay in bed, though there happened not to be the least glimpse of light in the room: she gave a terrible description of its hollow eyes, wan and meagre countenance, and the threatening aspect it wore: nay, she added, that it looked very earnestly at her, and beckoned to her with its skeleton finger, &c. My friend asked her, If she was certain she was really awake? Certain, replies she! What an idle question you ask me! My eyes were wide open: then, reply'd he, I am surprized you had courage enough to look at it! Oh, says she, I never looked at it, for I buried myself over head and ears in the bed-cloaths; but I am very sure it was in the room. My friend could not be so rude to a fine lady, as  
not



not to take her word, that she had certainly seen what she never once looked at:

So natural is superstition to the human mind, that it often raises substances from non-entities; creates a thousand wild phantoms out of nothing, as frightful as they are irrational; and, whenever the imagination takes a tour out of the natural into the invisible world, it seldom returns without the amazing idea of ghosts, goblins, dæmons, or fairies. It has been a laudable maxim among many honest and well-meaning people in the world, that reason has no manner of right to intermeddle in spiritual affairs! and if so, why may we not suppose ourselves generously left to be deluded by our own unerring imaginations; and, if we please, be mad by the authority of religion. How far it may be consistent with the interest of some of the espousers of particular systems, to encourage these dispositions in their followers, I shall not take upon me to determine.

Superstition and credulity may, and I believe do appear to many, innocent and indifferent things; but to the more thinking part of mankind, they are those powerful and formidable fetters that have long held the world in ignorance, and been the most important tools in the hands of designing men; for if a man can once be brought to believe what you desire he should believe, by the same authority he may be brought to act whatever is consistent with such a faith, be it ever so idle and ridiculous; if you tell him a spirit was seen playing at foot-ball with all the pewter dishes and chairs in the house, that it carried away the church steeple, and rung a peel upon all the bells at midnight; it will be no difficult matter to gain his assent, even if it were to something more ridiculous than all this. It is an

observation but too just, that the most stanch believers of this sort, are often the greatest infidels in articles of a more high and useful nature.

But to be less grave upon the subject, I am to observe, that in many of the chimney corners in the country, there are different sorts of ghosts that are often the subject of conversation; as the vulgar ghosts, and ghosts of superior rank and quality; the latter is generally one of the most considerable men in the parish, who rattles round his mansion-house every night in a coach and six, is known by his servants to be the very man himself that some time ago filled the great elbow chair in the parlour of that ancient seat; wears the same grey suit of cloaths turned up with black velvet, that he appeared in when alive, has the same rosy-coloured cheeks and dimple in his chin, that was heretofore visible to all his family, and remains so still to every man, woman and child, whose visionary nerves are sufficiently strong, clearly to discern any thing in in the dark.

He still retains the same humours and fancies as when alive, is as fond of noise and stale beer, as when he followed a pack of one kind of hounds all day, and spent the following night with another. The noise of hallooing and hooping is by the servants heard in the parlour; and, perhaps, by morning, a barrel of October beer found empty in the cellar, which tho' it may not be the first by five hundred that he has served in the same manner, it now becomes very troublesome to his posterity.

Sometimes he appears endued with a sort of prophetic spirit, and makes signs to the young squire his son to reverence the church, and duly  
pay



pay tithes to the parson of the parish, without giving him the trouble and anxiety of recovering them by a tedious suit of law, but always to make him his friend, invite him to dinner of a Sunday, and keep up the dignity of the family, by cracking two or three bottles with him after evening service.

There's another remarkable circumstance in these ghosts of quality that must not be omitted, which is, the fondness they retain for the best lodging-room in the house after they have been long dead and rotten in their graves ; infomuch that if any one presumes to lie in their beds, they are sure to be kicked and cuffed ; nay, perhaps tossed in a blanket : so unfociable and ill-natured do people grow when they are locked up in wainscot.

Having done due honour to those ghosts of fashion, I am now to point out the essential difference between them and spirits of lower fortune, called Vulgar apparitions ; but this I shall do in a very few words, as I apprehend my sagacious reader is already anticipating a description so commonly known to all the dairy-maids in the country ; who instead of seeing the poor illiterate ghost appear in its own bodily likeness, they very often observe it galloping over the meadows in the form of a white horse, without any legs, and grazing in their pastures without a head : at other times it wears the carcass of an old black dog, and stares them in the face with great saucer eyes, but is never so uncivil as to bite them ; some of the more discerning females of the family, will sometimes trace their footsteps in the ashes, and it is very common for them to receive three very solemn raps from the ghost at their chamber-doors, and

and if they happen to answer it, 'tis as sure to make them no reply, and if they do not answer it, 'tis as sure to be silent.

A very pious, but credulous bishop of our church, was relating a strange story of a dæmon that haunted a girl in Lothbury to a company of gentlemen in the city, when one of them told his lordship the following one.

As I was one night reading a bed (as my custom is, and all my family were at rest) I heard a foot deliberately ascend the stairs, and as it came nearer I heard something breathe: while I was musing what it should be, three hollow knocks at the door made me ask, who was there? and instantly the door flew open. "Ay, sir, and pray what did you see?" My lord I'll tell you: a tall thin figure stood before me, with withered hair, and an earthly aspect; he was covered with a long sooty garment that descended to his ancles, and his waste was clasped close within a broad leathern girdle: in one hand he held a black staff taller than himself, and in the other a round body of pale light, which shone feebly every way. "That's remarkable; but pray sir go on." It beckoned to me and I followed it down stairs, and there it pointed to the door, and then left me and made a hideous noise in the street. "This is really odd and surprizing: but pray now, did it give you no notice, what it might particularly seek or aim at?" Yes, my lord, it was the watchman, who came to shew me that my servants had left the doors open.

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